

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 2127

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PK, IN, AF
SUBJ: AFGHAN REACTION TO PAKISTAN, INDIAN ELECTIONS

1. SUMMARY. FINNISH CORRESPONDENT'S INTERVIEW
WITH PRESIDENT DAOUD, AND DE FACTO FOREIGN MINISTER
WAHEED ABDULLAH'S COMMENTS TO THE AMBASSADOR INDI-
CATE A "WAIT AND SEE" ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE SITUA-
TION IN PAKISTAN. ABDULLAH REITERATED THA THE
GOVERNMENT OF AFGHANISTAN (GOA) DOES NOT WISH THE
DISINTEGRATION OF PAKISTAND WOULD BE TROUBLED
BY REAL PAK INSTABILITY. AFGHANS CONTINUE TO
TREAT PAK DIPLOMATS WARMLY AND TURNED OUT IN IM-
PRESSIVE NUMBERS FOR THE PAK NATIONAL DAY RECEPTION.
COMMENTS ON INDIAN ELECTIONS ARE MORE SCATTERED
THOUGH SENIOR GOVERNMENT CIRCLES APPEAR PLEASED
THAT THE NEW INDIAN PRIME MINISTER SEEMS MORE
PRO WEST AND THAT THE INDIAN COMMUNIST PARTY
SUFFERED DEFEAT. END SUMMARY.

2. DAOUD INTERVIEW. DURING AN INTERVIEW WITH
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FINNISH CORRESPONDENT IRMA SONIO, PUBLISHED IN
MARCH 26 KABUL TIMES, PRESIDENT DAOUD WAS QUES-
TIONED ON PAK/AFGHAN RELATIONS. DAOUD REITERATED
THE STANDARD GOVERNMENT OF AFGHANISTAN (GOA)
POSITION ON THE "ONE POLITICAL PROBLEM" BETWEEN
THE TWO COUNTRIES (AFGHAN SUPPORT OF "INALIENABLE
RIGHTS OF PUSHTUN AND BALUCH BROTHERS"), AND

STATED THAT WHILE A SOLUTION IS NOT YET IN HAND THE "BENEFICIAL AND FRIENDLY" TALKS BETWEEN PAKISTAN PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO IN KABUL AND ISLAMABAD ALLOWED EACH SIDE TO UNDERSTAND BETTER THE OTHER'S POSITION. DAOUD ADDED THAT HE DID NOT KNOW HOW THE CURRENT SITUATION WOULD AFFECT FUTURE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES - IMPLYING IN SAYING THIS THAT SOME EFFECT IS POSSIBLE.

3. WAHEED ABDULLAH'S STATEMENT. DURING A MEETING ON MARCH 26, THE DE FACTO FOREIGN MINISTER WAHEED ABDULLAH REITERATED TO THE AMBASSADOR THAT THE GOA DOES NOT WISH THE DISINTEGRATION OF PAKISTAN AND THAT REAL INSTABILITY WOULD TROUBLE THE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT. WAHEED STATED THAT PRESIDENT DAOUD TOLD PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO DURING THEIR SUMMIT MEETINGS THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT ACTION BHUTTO MIGHT TAKE TO IMPROVE PAK/AFGHAN RELATIONS WOULD BE "TO GET HIS OWN HOUSE IN ORDER". ABDULLAH COMMENTED THAT THE ELECTION AND ITS TROUBLED AFTERMATH DEMONSTRATED THAT BHUTTO HAD NOT BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN DOING THIS. ABDULLAH ALSO EXHIBITED A CERTAIN IRONIC SATISFACTION THAT IT WAS NO LONGER JUST THE PUSHTUNS AND BALUCHIS WHO WERE GIVING BHUTTO PROBLEMS, BUT PUNJABIS AND SINDIS AS WELL.

4. AFGHAN WARMTH TOWARD PAKISTANI DIPLOMATS
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IN KABUL AND ATTENDANCE AT PAK DIPLOMATIC FUNCTIONS FOLLOWING THE DAOUD BHUTTO SUMMITS HAVE NOT BEEN AFFECTED BY RECENT EVENTS IN PAKISTAN. MARCH 23 NEWSPAPERS CARRY A PICTURE OF PAK PRESIDENT FAZAL ELAHI CHAUDRY AND NOTE THAT DAOUD HAD SENT CHOWDRY A CONGRATULATORY CABLE ON PAKISTAN NATIONAL DAY. PAK EMBASSY CELEBRATIONS ON THE DAY SAW AN IMPRESSIVE TURNOUT OF AFGHAN GOVERNMENT AND MILITARY OFFICIALS. NEWSPAPERS MARCH 24 PROMINENTLY FEATURED PHOTOGRAPH OF PAK AMBASSADOR ALI ARSHAD WARMLY WELCOMING WAHEED ABDULLAH TO THE RECEPTION.

5. AS INDIA FIGURES LESS IN GOA THINKING THAN PAKISTAN, WE HAVE HEARD FEWER REACTIONS TO THE INDIAN ELECTIONS. SENIOR AFGHAN GOVERNMENT CIRCLES HAVE MANIFESTED A CERTAIN SATISFACTION THAT PRIME MINISTER MORARJI DESAI SEEMS MORE

PRO-WEST THAN MRS GANDHI, AND THAT THE INDIAN COMMUNIST PARTY LOST MORE THAN TWO-THIRDS OF ITS PARLIAMENTARY SEATS. SAME CIRCLES APPEAR CONCERNED THAT USSR MIGHT BE TEMPTED TO FISH IN TROUBLED PAKISTANI WATERS.

6. COMMENT: WE BELIEVE SEVERE AND PROTRACTED POLITICAL DISLOCATION IN PAKISTAN WILL SLOW PAK-AFGHAN RAPPROCHEMENT. AT BEST AFGHANS MAY FEEL THAT BHUTTO'S WEAKENED POSITION LEAVES THEM NO FIRM HAND IN PAKISTAN TOWARD WHICH THEY MAY REACH. AT WORST THE GOA WILL FIND IT CANNOT IGNORE ACTS OF REPRESSION AGAINST THE NATIONAL AWAMI PARTY, THE BALUCHIS AND THE PUSHTUNS IN PAKISTAN -- THOUGH THIS REPRESSION MIGHT BE NO MORE THAN SPILLOVER FROM ACTIONS TAKEN GENERALLY AGAINST THOSE OPPOSING BHUTTO. RECALLING THAT
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IN SUCH EARLIER PAKISTANI CRISES AS THAT OF 1971 THE AFGHANS REMAINED STUDIOUSLY APART, WE BELIEVE THAT GOA WILL AVOID ENTERING INTO OR COMMENTING UPON INTERNAL EVENTS IN PAKISTAN UNLESS SEVERELY PROVOKED.
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